

BOOK REVIEWS

Gynaecological Endocrinology for the Practitioner. By P. M. F. Bishop. 2nd ed., 1951. E. and S. Livingstone, Edinburgh. Pp. 121 + ix, 15 illus. (12s.)

This concise and excellent book has reached a well-deserved second edition. Though primarily addressed to the general practitioner, it was, in its first edition, read with interest and instruction by most gynaecologists as well. There are many changes and additions, dictated by altered views and some advances, but the purpose and brevity remain as before.

The necessary introductory explanation of the menstrual cycle is, I think, marred only by an illustration of the menstrual clock—an illustration more suited to a "popular" book. Then follows a chapter on the gonadotrophins and sex hormones emphasizing the variable and disappointing results obtained with the former. These disappointments have led to the increasing use of pituitary and ovarian x-radiation in the U.S.A.—a practice fraught with the danger of possible production of abnormalities in the fourth generation. It would seem better to await improved gonadotrophins. Amenorrhoea, menorrhagia, dysmenorrhoea, and the menopause are all dealt with at some length, and summarized and precise treatment schedules are given in an appendix. In a field confused by so many conflicting and unproven claims, this dogmatic simplification is extremely useful. It frowns on clumsy, heavy oestrogen dosage of the menopause although the disadvantages of continuous dosage are not stressed. Oestrogen should never be given continuously, however small the dose.

There is also a most instructive section on infertility, outlining the logical investigation of the childless couple. The healthy doubts expressed on the results of endocrine therapy in stimulating spermatogenesis should do much to discourage its prevalent and indiscriminate use in this field. All too often cases appear at Infertility Clinics with sperm counts reduced to nil by high dosage of testosterone. Indeed more pregnancies result from stopping testosterone and oestrogen than from ordering them.

For the prevention of repeated miscarriage, progesterone implants are advocated, and Smith's high-oestrogen method is only mentioned. Actually there are as many advocates of the one as of the other, and almost as many favour neither. The book ends with a number of useful appendices, one of which tabulates the relative potency of various oestrogens.

Conclusion—sound, tried treatments clearly and briefly set out and explained, and, above all, easy to find.

R. H. B.

Traité de Médecine, Vol. 3, Tuberculosis, Cancer, Sarcoidosis, and Syphilis. By J. Bretey, H. Brocard, G. Brouet, J. Delarue, C. Oberling, L. M. Pautrier, and R. Tulasne. 1951. Masson, Paris. Pp. 907, 328 illus. (Fr. 3,800; 84s.)

This is the third volume of a Treatise of Medicine, complete in seventeen volumes, to which over 250 authors have contributed.

The section on tuberculosis covers the bacteriology and pathology of the disease very thoroughly and includes a chapter on B.C.G. vaccination. The clinical aspects are dealt with elsewhere in the treatise. The chapters on cancer describe the general pathology and aetiology of malignant disease. Professor Pautrier has contributed the section on sarcoidosis, which gives a very full presentation of the pathology and clinical aspects of this condition.

The section on syphilis, which occupies nearly 400 pages, almost half the volume, is written by Professor Pautrier. The introductory chapters dealing with experimental syphilis, immunity, and the pathological anatomy of the disease, give a very good exposition of these fundamentals. These sections will probably be the most interesting to venereologists in Great Britain as the clinical section is limited to syphilis of the skin and mucous membranes and congenital syphilis. Skin syphilis is described very fully and is admirably illustrated. It is a pity that the manifestations of the disease as it affects other systems could not have been included in this volume, instead of being scattered through the other parts of the treatise.

Treatment is dealt with at length and a good appreciation is given of what is still a fluid situation. Penicillin is discussed fully, French opinion favours the use of bismuth as an adjuvant, but in early syphilis Prof. Pautrier gives four injections of 1.2 mega-units of penicillin with aluminium monostearate at intervals of 4 to 7 days. The use of arsenicals and heavy metals is described, but iodides are not mentioned. In the section on drug reactions, the question of syringe-transmitted jaundice deserves more than the passing mention it receives. The new oral antibiotics are not discussed.

The section on the serological diagnosis of syphilis is contributed by Prof. Tulasne. Part of this chapter is taken up with short descriptions of the techniques of serum tests. It may be questioned whether these are of much interest to the clinician, to whom the book is primarily addressed, and whether the space could not have been more profitably devoted to a fuller discussion

of the interpretation of serum tests and of their limitations, and of tests of the cerebrospinal fluid.

This book can be recommended to venereologists as offering a sound and up-to-date presentation of the basic pathology of syphilis and a clear and detailed description of syphilis of the skin and mucous membranes. The clinical photographs and photomicrographs are excellent, and the production of the book is of a high standard.

A. E. W.

Report on the Activities and Meetings of the Coordinating Committee on Abstracting and Indexing in the Medical and Biological Sciences. 1951. Unesco publication No. 580, H.M.S.O., London. Pp. 92. (5s.).

This publication gives an account of the proceedings of a Unesco committee, formed in 1946 to attempt the coordination of the work of the various national abstracting services, which met during the three following years. Some half dozen short essays on different aspects of these subjects by such well-known authorities

as Dr. Charles Wilcocks, Professor P. Lepine, and Dr. G. M. Findlay are also included, and there is an interesting survey of the work of the committee by its Chairman, Dr. Hugh Clegg, editor of the *British Medical Journal*.

All who undertake the preparation of medical abstracts and many who merely read them will find much in this little book that will both interest and instruct.

G. L. M. McE.

Lehrbuch der Haut- und Geschlechtskrankheiten. By Walther Schoenfeld. 1951, Addendum to 5th edition. Georg Thieme Verlag, Stuttgart. 7 pp.

This short pamphlet briefly reviews the latest forms of treatment in skin affections and the venereal diseases, and thus brings Schoenfeld's text-book up to date. Hormone, vitamin, and antibiotic treatment as well as chemotherapy are related to the various diseases in which they have been found efficacious, and advice is given upon dosage and methods of administration.